plumbing business. Her father had installed the first toilets on Thing Street, some of which were still operating today. Johnny used to see her outside in the morning, feeding a small flock of WHITE SQUIRRELS that had become almost as much a fixture as herself.

There was a tide of speculation erasing all this, but some evenings when he walked home it seemed the tide reversed itself, there was a strong wind blowing the other way, and the wind and the tide, whatever they were, blew back the old-fashioned haunting haunted faces, happy and haggard. He would lie awake till early morning recognizing over the rumble of the Thing Car the laughter and cries of The Old Thing Street. WHITE SQUIRREL WAY would be longer and higher but, above all, quieter. It would be SILENT. Citizen Hearse would see to that.

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Johnny heard shouting upstairs. It was Michael. Usually so quiet and so small. Deane had warned him about his shouting. It was something he'd learn to put up with. It was blood curdling.

It got louder as Michael descended the dark-varnished stairs. Johnny was on the second floor landing when Michael passed him, shouting and beating his ears so fast his fists were blurry. Johnny followed him downstairs.

Michael halted in front if the reinforced glass door of the landlord's apartment. There was no one there. Johnny was alone, and on Michael's side of the glass. He knew what Michael wanted. He turned to him, cringing. His shiny hair accentuated his pallor. He had a good complexion, a handsome face, despite his thirst for coke and his nasty habit of slashing his cheeks with disposable razors. Johnny thought the voices drove him to it, but his behavior was also manipulative. It was probably significant that he used disposable razors, because they weren't very strong and tended to make shallow cuts. He'd look terrible for a few days, but the cuts healed quickly and all but vanished in a week.

When he cut himself somebody would give him a sedative, or two. Maybe even a couple of cigarettes. That was what he really wanted, but it wasn't worth permanently disfiguring himself. The sedatives would have turned down the voices, but not turned them off. Maybe he enjoyed them for other reasons. Maybe he was hooked. Now and then the hospital would get concerned and try to cut him off no matter how much he cut his face.

Johnny would offer to apply some ointment to the wounds. At first he'd refuse. Johnny would insist. Eventually he'd comply, and turn one cheek and then the other. After all, Johnny was the alpha male. When the cutting didn't get results, Michael would run away.

Deane said he stayed in the asylum to build up his bank account. He didn't need money while he was there, but some government money was deposited to his account anyway. When he'd built up a small sum, he'd elope. He was institutionalized. The asylum was not merely where he wanted to be (and he desperately wanted to be there). It was where he really was when he was nominally with us.

Come to think of it, his elopements only made sense in the context of the asylum. Eloping was a part of the that system. Workman wrote that it was the right of every mental patient to elope; it was a poor asylum, from which one could not elope. It went with wards, walls, and barred windows from which it was possible to sling two knotted sheets without danger of falling.

It was not a part of their system. They didn't have one. They improvised. There was no